

# Hearings on Religious Persecution in Sudan: Adlan Abdelaziz Prepared Testimony

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(Note: These are unedited and uncorrected transcripts)

Adlan Abdelaziz

Maryland, February 15, 2000

Good

Morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I am a Sudanese citizen, my name Adlan Abdelaziz, and I have experienced the arrest and severe torture by the security authorities in Khartoum-Sudan. I was accused of having illegal political activities.

I was badly beaten with rubber hose pipes and batons, bunched on face and doused in cold water. For four days I was kept standing on my feet. The only break I was allowed was when I am in the rest room or doing my prayers. The instructions are: "do not allow him to sleep or even to have a nap." I stayed incommunicado, in a secret detention center, commonly known in Sudan as "ghost house."

I was released in the three times without charge, trial and have not been allowed access to a legal counsel. On the contrary, upon my release, I was forced to make daily report to the security offices where they keep me waiting until sunset.

Actually

since the National Islamic Front (NIF) military coup toppled the pre-existing parliamentary government in Sudan in June 1989, thousands of anti-military regimes activists were detained without charge or trial for periods ranging from a few days to several months. Torture was widespread. Courts imposed the judicial punishments of flogging and amputation. children were abducted by paramilitary forces and the fate of hundreds of children remained unknown. Hundreds of people were extrajudicially executed and indiscriminately killed in the war zones.

Sudanese

from virtually all sectors of society, from northern Sudan, the war-torn south and the Nuba mountains, suffered human rights violations as the authorities continued to suppress political opposition.

During

my detention's periods, I met hundreds of detainees belonging to different political opposition groups, mainly the dominant three religious orders of Sudanese traditional Islam: the Ansar, the Khatmiya and the Ansar El Sunna. Other small religious groups include the republican brothers and Altakfeer group. Added to this were civilians and former and serving army officers who were suspected of a plot to overthrow the government. As well, many other independent individuals were detained: southern Sudanese, students, trade unionists, members of banned political parties, people suspected of involvement with the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the main political opposition umbrella. Exclusively, all detainees were accused of being active opponents to the military Islamic government.

I

left Sudan accompanied by my family, as my wife is a U.S. Citizen, for the United States of America in August 1996, and since then I am a keen observer of what is going on in my country .I have documented information that, till now, detainees are denied adequate health care. They are hold incommunicado and are suffering inhuman torture while the Islamic government is going on with its policies of the unannounced official arrest. Because of domestic protest and international community pressures, the detention centers were, temporarily, evacuated. However, despite the regime's various maneuver to secure the acceptance and consent of the International community, the government general policies and rules including the unlimited power of the security forces remains unchanged.

As most of you

know, Sudan, like some other African countries, is multi- cultural and multi-religious. This entails a minimum degree of cultural and religious tolerance, to furnish the country's cohesion and national integrity. To some extents, the post-independence parliamentary regimes were able to secure that degree of tolerance. Following the military Islamic coup in June 1989, to the disadvantage of the country , religious intolerance was the dominant trait in Sudan politics. To be able to talk about this phenomenon, one has to be knowledgeable as regarding both Islam, as such, and the National Islamic Front (NIF) which advocates Islam as the main source of its ideological set-up. Through out more than four decades, the NIF consider itself, contrary to the other Islamic orders in Sudan, as having modern and better understanding of Islam. Consequently, they believe that they are the salvagers of mankind and are the only qualified religious party to navigate humanity from darkness of devil to the brightness of paradise. Accordingly, every body should listen and follow them. As such, they are the new fascism of the century .

No

clues, whatever, in their constitution indicates religious tolerance. Three incidents, during my detention, would reinforce the NIF's apparent religious intolerance. During my first arrest, I met four Christian detainees who had already undergone three months of

detention, were accused of having links with SPLA. After seven months of detention, one of them announced that he switched to Islam. The security officers celebrate this event and released him two days later. Eventually, the other three followed suit and were instantly released. It works!.

During my second detention, I met one of the Republican Brothers Party (RBP) member, his name Elnagi Mohamed Ahmed Ramadan. It was known that the RB have suspended their public activity following the assassination of their leader, the late Mahmoud Mohamed Taha in 1983. Taha was assassinated by encourage and deliberate plans of Nimeri' s alliances at that time, the NIF, because he advocates different perspective of the Islamic texts. Elnagi was kept under arrest because, he was outspokenly critical of the NIF regime. During my third arrest, I met Sheikh Mohamed Abdelkarim. He is a leader of an extremist Islamic group in Sudan known as 'Gamat Altakfeer'. He was arrested because he declared that Turabi, NIF leader, is such far from real premises of Islam. Abdelkarim is much more fundamentalist and extremist than Truabi, but religious fanaticism generates more fanaticism.

Hundreds of examples testify to the regime's policies of religious intolerance. Female students were flogged because they did not abide by the so-called Islamic dress, as perceived by the NIF. Khogli Osman, a popular Sudanese singer was murdered by an Islamic fundamentalist, in the early nineties, because he is not an Islamic singer !

It is true that there is no freedom of religious beliefs in Sudan. But, by the same token, there are no freedoms of press, association, organization, etc. In short, Sudan, under NIF government rules, is a big detention camp for the Sudanese.

Action must be taken to ensure that all those living in Sudan could enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Human rights body must call publicly upon the Government to take all necessary steps to secure respect for human dignity. Further plans and policies have to be worked out and applied that would force the regime to abide by the international agreement and codes of human rights.

We should pay closer attention to that phenomenon in order to help rid the world of a scourge that has already gained control Sudan, and could threaten international peace and security. Turabi was courageous enough to declare in a public lecture, as late as last Wednesday , that the NIF regime was able to bring to political power some of its alliance in Africa, by directly funded election campaign in their countries!!!

I conclude my statement by appealing to you that efforts must be redoubled to combat Islamic extremism which continues to kill innocent people in Sudan and elsewhere. Sudanese NIP regime is still supporting and training other Sunni extremists from other countries. A fact to be emphasized is that, as Sunni extremists, were not supported by Shea-dominated Iran. The only safe haven for them will be the present Sudan.